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Prot. N. 2022 RPU-13

DECREE

IN THE NAME OF GOD. AMEN.

On April 8, 2021, following consultation with the Presbyteral Council of the Archdiocese of Chicago, I issued a decree extinguishing St. James Parish, Sauk Village, St. John Parish, Glenwood, and St. Ann Parish, Lansing, all in South Suburban Cook County, Illinois. The decree united the three parishes in one new territorial parish called, *ad Interim*, SS. Ann, James, and John Parish. The union was effective from July 1, 2021. A petition for hierarchical recourse against the decree of April 8, 2021, was rejected before the Congregation for the Clergy on October 19, 2021 (Prot. N. 2021 3292). By decree dated October 28, 2021, the new parish was named All Souls Parish.

On December 22, 2021, the Reverend Mark Kalema, pastor of All Souls Parish, after consulting his parishioners, discerned the continued use for worship of St. John Church, Glenwood, was no longer feasible for the new All Souls Parish. Consequently, he wrote to me and the Episcopal Vicar for his region of the archdiocese, asking that St. John Church be relegated to profane but not sordid use (*CIC* c. 1222 §2).

A church may be relegated to profane but not sordid use when, after hearing the presbyteral council, the diocesan bishop determines there is a "grave cause" indicating a church should no longer be used for divine worship and that the good of souls suffers no detriment from the relegation. A Definitive Sentence of the College of the Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura given May 4, 1996, considered what constituted the grave cause required for the relegation to profane but not sordid use of a church belonging to a parish formed from the union of parishes (*Ministerium Iustitiae: Jurisprudence of the Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura*, Montreal: W & L (2011): Prot. N. 24388/93 CA, pp. 526-527).

As related in the Definitive Sentence, a new parish formed from the extinctive union of five parishes sought to relegate three of its five churches to profane but not sordid use. Faithful who worshipped at one of these churches took recourse against the relegation of their church. The Supreme Tribunal found that the following conditions together constituted the grave cause required for relegation: (1) preservation of all the churches would impose an intolerable burden on the new parish; (2) the church in question was no longer of service to the pastoral care of the faithful due to changed circumstances; (3) the new parish was burdened from the beginning by a huge debt; (4) sale of the church would offer ready and effective assistance, otherwise lacking, to the urgent needs of the new parish; (5) the number of faithful contributing to the support of the parish was diminishing; and (6) charity and other assistance to the poor should not be neglected to preserve a sacred building.

In this case it is established that (1) Retaining St. John Church, Glenwood, of All Souls Parish as a place of divine worship imposes a financial burden on the parish from operational

and maintenance expenses associated with the church. If kept for parish use, the capital expenses needed for the St. John Church campus are \$50,000.00. The total capital expenses required for the new parish are more than \$2,600,000.00 over seven years. Furthermore, All Souls Parish now has the burden of the ordinary annual expenses for maintaining St. John Church.

(2) St. John Church is not needed for divine worship for the average of 333 Sunday worshippers regularly attending there in October 2019, before the arrival of the novel coronavirus pandemic of COVID-19. Those who worshipped at St. John Church are well accommodated at the 1,000-seat parish church of St. Ann and the 1,000-seat St. James Church.

(3) On December 31, 2021, the combined debt of All Souls Parish was \$5,122,028.00, offset by savings of \$390,702.00 on deposit.

(4) Sale or rental of St. John Church would benefit the mission of All Souls Parish with ready cash proceeds. There will be additional savings from unspent capital repairs and at least \$60,000.00 annually for ordinary expenses for operations and maintenance.

(5) The total number of faithful regularly worshipping on Sundays at St. John Church was 333 in October 2019 (Fiscal Year 2020), a more than 40% decrease over the 560 attending in October 2004 (Fiscal Year 2005). Over the same 15-year period, the average offertory collections decreased by \$87,452.00, almost 33% (from \$269,231.00 to \$181,799.00). The Fiscal Year 2021 collections totaled \$134,911.00.

(6) Preserving St. John Church for divine worship will result in continued and unnecessary operational and maintenance costs that will cripple the ability of All Souls Parish to serve the poor, enhance its evangelical mission, and remain viable.

Finally, since March 2020, the novel coronavirus pandemic of COVID-19 has diminished parts of the United States economy, materially and negatively changing the financial well-being of the archdiocese, some of our parishes, and many poor and middle-class families. There is concern for the long-term economic survival of some institutions.

It is unreasonable to expect a new parish formed from the union of three parishes to continue maintaining a church it cannot afford, does not need, and which is no longer useful for divine worship. Moreover, there are no parochial, archdiocesan, or other known sources of funds available to keep and maintain St. John Church as a place of Catholic worship. There is no governmental assistance for building or maintaining churches in the United States of America.

The reasonable and safe course is to relegate the church to profane but not sordid use, allowing it to be sold or otherwise developed for the benefit of the new parish, its ministries, and the work of charity.

THEREFORE, know that I, Cardinal Blase J. Cupich, Archbishop of Chicago, according to the norms of the Code of Canon Law, convened the Presbyteral Council of the Archdiocese of Chicago electronically *via* the internet on January 17, 2022, and again on January 18, 2022. Hearing the council's deliberations and the council's January 18th vote of 32 for and one against the proposal to relegate St. John Church of All Souls Parish to profane but not sordid use; invoking the Holy Spirit; satisfying myself that the good of souls will suffer no detriment, and that the parish church of St. Ann and St. James Church are sufficient for the needs of the parish,

I decree the following:


1. Effective immediately, St. John Church, Glenwood, of All Souls Parish is relegated to profane but not sordid use;
2. Officials of the Archdiocese of Chicago, cooperating with the pastor of All Souls Parish, will assure the real property associated with St. John Church is secure for the benefit of All Souls Parish;
3. If alienated, the alienation of St. John Parish is to provide All Souls Parish with the proceeds from sale of the real property or rental under lease;
4. When approved, the reports given to the Presbyteral Council on this matter, together with the minutes of the council meetings of January 17, 2022, and January 18, 2022, are to be attached to this decree and available upon request to eligible parties; and
5. Notification of this decree is to be made immediately through publication on the Archdiocesan Website. It is then to be sent to the Pastor of All Souls Parish for communication to parishioners through publication in the parish bulletin or other suitable means.

Before hierarchical recourse (appeal) may be taken against this decree, a written, signed, and dated petition to reconsider or amend the decree, must be sent or delivered to the Archbishop of Chicago within ten (10) useful days from notification of the decree (CIC cc. 1734, 1735, 1737). The address is Office of the Archbishop, Archdiocese of Chicago, 835 North Rush Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611.

Given this 14th day of February, A.D. 2022.
From Holy Name Cathedral,
Chicago, Illinois


Archbishop of Chicago




Ecclesiastical Notary

Attachments

ONCE AVAILABLE, DATA PERTAINING TO THIS DECREE AND SUBMITTED TO THE PRESBYTERAL COUNCIL OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO AND MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETINGS OF JANUARY 17, 2022, AND JANUARY 18, 2022, MAY BE REQUESTED BY ELIGIBLE PARTIES FROM THE OFFICE FOR CANONICAL AFFAIRS